
**Natural Resources, Ecology &
Parks Committee**

ESB 5089

Brief Description: Creating a task force to study off-road vehicle noise management.

Sponsors: Senators Sheldon, Fraser and Kline.

<p>Brief Summary of Engrossed Bill</p>

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Creates a legislative task force on off-road vehicle noise management. |
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Hearing Date:

Staff: Jason Callahan (786-7117).

Background:

The operators of a non-highway vehicle can be cited for a traffic violation for a number of reasons. These reasons include operating a vehicle in a manner that endangers another's property, not having proper lighting when on property not belonging to the owner, running the vehicle without a spark arrester, and driving in a manner that injures or destroys trees or other vegetation (RCW 46.03.120).

An operator can also be cited for a traffic violation if the muffler on the non-highway vehicle does not meet set standards. Mufflers for these vehicles must operate at a noise level of less than 87 decibels as measured on a scale set by the Society of Automotive engineers (SAE). If an SAE test is not available, then the muffler must not emit a noise louder than 105 decibels when measured at a 45-degree angle and 20 inches away from the exhaust pipe of a stationary non-highway vehicle running at one half of the vehicle's maximum allowable engine speed (RCW 46.03.120).

Traffic infractions for non-highway vehicles are punishable by a fine of not less than \$25 (RCW 46.09.190).

Summary of Bill:

A task force on off-road vehicle noise management is created. The task force consists of two members of the House of Representatives and two members of the State Senate. Additional participants may be invited by the legislative members. These participants include representatives of:

- County commissions.

- Port districts.
- The Department of Natural Resources.
- The Department of Ecology.
- The Interagency Committee for Outdoor Recreation.
- The Parks and Recreation Commission.
- Off-road vehicle manufacturers.
- The U.S. Forest Service.
- Recreational users.
- Interested citizens.

The task force is instructed to focus on the enforceability of current off-road vehicle decibel levels, the appropriateness of off-road vehicle usage requirements, the applicability of local noise ordinances, and the barriers to using public lands to create off-road vehicle riding opportunities.

Recommendations of the group, in the form of draft legislation, is due to the Legislature by December 1, 2005.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.